

Mr. Simon then spoke to the resolution.

Discussion:

Mr. Miguel Friaz (ILL) expressed opposition to the Minority Resolution indicating there were other ways to leadership, not necessarily through seminary.

Ms. Alison Morales (CA NV,S) shared that serving on the search committee of a small church allowed her to encounter a number of clergy candidates who cannot afford to accept a call to a small church because they have to make their decision based on finances.

Ms. Lynda Bigler (LCM) indicated the previous amendments to the original resolution were not necessary. One does not need to have an MDiv degree in order to be a minister anymore.

Ms. Carole Barner (MOMS) shared that not all have the capacity to attend seminary. When mission is highlighted, the money will follow. Please pray for the Collegium and for all members in discernment to make theological education a priority in all forms.

Mr. Adrian Maxey (KO) called the question and the motion was seconded.

13-GS-54 VOTED: The Twenty-ninth General Synod votes to close debate.

13-GS-55 VOTED: The Twenty-ninth General Synod adopts the minority resolution:

5. RESOLUTION AGAINST BULLYING AND DISCRIMINATION

Assistant Moderator Holeman called upon Ms. Kathy Rahorst, Chairperson of Committee 3, to present the recommended actions from that committee.

Ms. Rahorst moved that the Twenty-ninth General Synod adopt the Resolution Against Bullying and Discrimination.

Discussion:

Mr. Charles Wildman (MASS) expressed appreciation to the Central Atlantic Conference for originating the resolution. He would like to see a broader discussion of bullying in terms of the connection between churches and lay leaders where pastors have been driven out.

Ms. Kelli Parrish Lucas (JWM) spoke from a personal perspective as a victim in the workplace and even in seminary. Prayerfully consider what it means for us as a church here.

Ms. Colleen Samson (SOC) reported that much attention has been given to the bullying of children. This behavior is not acceptable anywhere, especially in our churches. We say everyone is welcome, but persist in behaviors that are not welcoming. It must stop in all forms.

Mr. Tim Gormley (ME) moved to amend that the items listed in Lines 1070 to 1072 be listed in alphabetical order. The motion was seconded.

A motion was made to close debate on the amendment.

13-GS-56 VOTED: The Twenty-ninth General Synod voted to close debate on the amendment.

13-GS-57 VOTED: The Twenty-ninth General Synod votes to amend the resolution by listing the items in Lines 1070 to 1072 in alphabetical order.

Ms. Holly Adams (CONN) requested the word “age” be added at Line 1070. With no objections, the word was included.

Ms. Dee Lundberg (JWM) moved to amend by adding the word “clergy” after “stakeholders” in Line 1066. The motion was seconded.

13-GS-58 VOTED: The Twenty-ninth General Synod votes to amend by adding the word “clergy” after “stakeholders” in Line 1066.

Mr. Ian Bryant Smith (CONN) called the question and the motion was seconded.

13-GS-59 VOTED: The Twenty-ninth General Synod votes to close debate.

13-GS-60 VOTED: The Twenty-ninth General Synod adopts the Resolution Against Bullying and Discrimination, as amended.

RESOLUTION AGAINST BULLYING AND DISCRIMINATION

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ supports the right of students to attend schools that are safe and free from violence, harassment, bullying, and discrimination; and

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ encourages and expects all churches of the denomination to provide and enforce church policies to ensure the safety of all children and youth participating in church activities; and

WHEREAS, providing safe learning environments in all settings, be it churches, schools, sports complexes, etc., that ensure both the physical and emotional safety of students, and create the conditions necessary to foster success in all endeavors where children and youth are involved; and

WHEREAS, bullying is one of the more common and vicious ways by which such success is imperiled;

WHEREAS, bullying is any behavior that happens when someone is subjected to negative actions from one or more people and has a hard time defending him or herself. Moreover, bullying takes various forms: teasing, taunting or verbal abuse, punching, shoving and physical acts, spreading rumors, ganging up on others, or excluding someone from a group; and

WHEREAS, cyber-bullying occurs when a person uses the Internet, mobile phones, or other electronic devices to bully, the impact can be more long-lasting. Some examples of cyber-bullying are: sending mean or threatening texts, e-mail, or instant messages; posting damaging pictures or hurtful messages online; tricking someone into revealing personal information and sending it to others; and creating websites to make fun of someone; and

WHEREAS, children ache to be considered a viable and vital part of their community and yearn to be treated with dignity; and

WHEREAS, some significantly effective practices are being developed around the country, increased collaboration among schools, churches, community service organizations, and civic clubs needs to be encouraged and those various entities need to be equipped to develop strategies to enhance their effectiveness in reducing bullying; and

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ supports communities that develop, implement and monitor policies and programs that address the prevention, intervention and elimination of violence, harassment, bullying, and discrimination.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-ninth General Synod of the United Church of Christ encourages all Conferences of the United Church of Christ to work with a broad spectrum of local community stakeholders, clergy, coaches, instructors, parents, staff, students and teachers, and to develop, implement, and monitor policies and programs that foster and support a positive learning climate free from violence, harassment, bullying, and discrimination based on, but not limited to, age, race, ethnicity, language, national identity, political or theological perspectives, appearance, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, economic status or class.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call for further education for all people in all settings of our church about the definition, causes and effects of bullying, so that we foster climates of greater safety, and so that we grow in our capacity to love our neighbors as ourselves in word and deed.

BE IT ALSO FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-ninth General Synod of the United Church of Christ urges all settings to invest in, promote, and support comprehensive, coordinated, and collaborative strategies to prevent violence, harassment, bullying, and discrimination in places of learning so that all students have the opportunity to attend school, engage in the classroom, achieve academic success, and participate in other school activities.

FUNDING

Funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Collegium of Officers, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

6. RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL STAFF

Mr. Holeman called the order of the day so the national staff could be recognized.